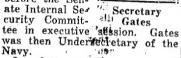STATINTL

Officer Says Gates Tried to KO Red Report

By JERRY GREENE

Washington, March 7 (NEWS Bureau).—Retired Navy Capt. Robert A. Winston tonight accused Defense Secretary Thomas Gates of trying to railroad him into a mental ward in 1955 to discredit his charges that Communists had infiltrated the Pentagon.

Winston in 1955 appeared before the Senate Internal Security Committee in executive session. Gates was then Undersecretary of the Navy.

Secretary Gates

In a letter to Chairman James O. Eastland (D-Miss.) of the Internal Security Committee, Winston has now requested that his closed session testimony be made public.

Angry Over Apology

Winston told THE NEWS, that he became incensed when Gates recently apologized to the National Council of Churches for an Air Force manual which included a section linking the Protestant clergy with Communism and decided to "break" his anonymity.

Under the name "Col. Victor J. Fox," Winston has for years been an extremely active writer in a one-man anti-Communist campaign and his identity has been a carefully guarded secret.

As Col. Fox he wrote a thinly disguised novel "The Pentagon Case" in 1958, relating a situation substantially identical with his own experiences.

Capt. Winston was a fighter squadron commander and an air group commander in World War II and received five combat decorations. He served with the Central Intelligence Agency in 1951 and 1952, retired at his own request after the Korean War and in 1955 was appointed special assistant to the Secretary of the Navy for personnel and reserve forces at a salary of $12,000 a year.

He was serving in this job when he testified before the Senate committee.

Refused to Resign

In his letter to Eastland, Winston recalled that he had testified several hours before the Internal Security Committee.

"I did so," Winston wrote, "only because Mr. Gates, who at that time was the Navy's Undersecretary, had personally ordered an assistant secretary of the Navy to discharge me without causue as the latter's special assistant, a GS-16 'supergrade' appointment. As you know, I refused to resign and requested an opportunity to hear the charges against me, directly from my accusers."

Winston recounted how his request was disregarded. He prepared an official report on Communist infiltration in the Pentagon "in line of duty" and had this this thrown back to him by the inspector general.

"Subsequently," Winston wrote, "as you know, Pentagon officials reporting directly to Mr. Gates attempted to railroad me into the mental ward of Bethesda Naval Hospital, in an obvious attempt to discredit my official report and my testimony before your committee."